

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs to sponsor nine special programs during the 2019 winter-holiday season

(DOVER, Del.—Nov. 20, 2019)—The [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs](#) will be sponsoring nine special events, including four winter-holiday-themed activities, between Nov. 28, 2019 and Jan. 1, 2020. A full schedule is included below. All programs are free and open to the public.

Thursday, Nov. 28, 2019

Thanksgiving Day. All museums of the State of Delaware (the [John Dickinson Plantation](#), the [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), [The Old State House](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#)) will be closed. 302-744-5054.

Friday, Nov. 29, 2019

Day After Thanksgiving. All museums of the State of Delaware will be open: The [Johnson Victrola Museum](#) and [The Old State House](#), open 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.; the [John Dickinson Plantation](#), [New Castle Court House Museum](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#), open 10 a.m.—4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019

“Hospitality Night.” Holiday-themed program in which the museum will be decorated for the season by the [Sussex Gardeners](#) including luminarias lighting the entrance walkway. Activities will include historical interpreters, demonstrations, music and seasonal refreshments. Presented in partnership with the [Lewes Chamber of Commerce](#).

[Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. 5–8 p.m.
302-645-1148.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

“Holidays With Victor.” Guided tours examine holiday music recorded by Victor Records accompanied by 78-rpm records played on authentic Victor Talking Machines. [First Saturday in the First State](#) program. [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3262.



The Johnson Victrola
Museum will present
“Holidays With Victor”
on Dec. 7, 2019.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

“The First State.” Guided tours explore Delaware’s ratification of the U.S. Constitution and its legacy as the first state to enter the union. [First Saturday in the First State](#) program. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

Delaware Day awards ceremony. Event honors participants in the Delaware Department of State’s 18th annual [Delaware Day Fourth Grade Competition](#) which challenges students to create displays that help illustrate and explain the U.S. Constitution and the role played by Delawareans in the writing and ratification of the nation’s founding document. [Delaware Public Archives](#), 121 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Dover. 10 a.m. 302-744-5000.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

“Tour Zwaanendael Museum.” Enjoy the museum’s festive holiday-décor created by the [Sussex Gardeners](#). Event held in conjunction with the Lewes Historical Society’s [Christmas Tour of Lewes](#). [Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings

Highway, Lewes. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. 302-645-1148.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

“Delaware Valley Archaeology and History Symposium.”

Featuring presentations on the history and archaeology of the lower Delaware Valley that include new research and recent updates to on-going projects including [Avery's Rest](#) and the search for [Fort Casimir](#). Presented in partnership with the [Archaeological Society of Delaware](#) and the [New Castle Historical Society](#). [The Arsenal](#), 30 Market St., New Castle. 9:30–3:30 p.m. 302-322-2794.



Image of Fort Casimir after it had been captured by the Swedes, improved and renamed Fort Trefalddighet. The fort will be one of the topics explored at the “Delaware Valley Archaeology and History Symposium” on Dec. 7, 2019.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

CANCELLED: Buena Vista Holiday Open House. One-day-only event featuring tours of one of Delaware's most historic homes decorated for the holidays, refreshments in the library and a hands-on activity for children and adults. [Buena Vista: A Delaware Country Estate](#), 661 S. Dupont Highway (Route 13), New Castle. 10 a.m.–1 p.m. 302-323-4430. **NOTE: Event cancelled.**

Friday, Dec. 13, 2019

[Grey Fox Band](#). Blues ensemble presented in partnership with

the [Delaware Friends of Folk](#) and the [First State Heritage Park](#). [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. 7:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019

[“Spirit of Christmas in New Castle.”](#) One of the best preserved Colonial-era towns in America features a day-long series of events including tours of decorated historic homes, re-enactments, programs at museums including the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), crafts, musical entertainment and more. Downtown New Castle. 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. 302-328-3279.



The New Castle Green with the New Castle Court House Museum in the foreground. The historic town will host the “Spirit of Christmas in New Castle” on Dec. 14, 2019.

Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019

Demonstrations by the Thistledown Fiber Arts Guild. Program explores spinning, weaving, knitting and other fabric arts. [John Dickinson Plantation](#), 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover. Program 1–3 p.m. Museum open 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.



Mansion house at the John Dickinson Plantation

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2019

Christmas Eve. The following museums of the State of Delaware will be open: [The Old State House](#), open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; the [John Dickinson Plantation](#) and [New Castle Court House Museum](#), open 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The [Johnson Victrola Museum](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#), closed.

Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2019

Christmas Day. All museums of the State of Delaware (the [John Dickinson Plantation](#), the [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), [The Old State House](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#)) will be closed. 302-744-5054.

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2019

New Year's Eve. The following museums of the State of Delaware will be open: [The Old State House](#), open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; the [John Dickinson Plantation](#) and [New Castle Court House Museum](#), open 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The [Johnson Victrola Museum](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#), closed.

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2020

New Year's Day. All museums of the State of Delaware (the [John Dickinson Plantation](#), the [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), [The Old State House](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#)) will be closed. 302-744-5054.

Exhibits and displays

In addition to special programming, the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is sponsoring the following exhibits and displays. Admission is free and open to the public:

Through Dec. 12, 2019

[“Delaware Day Competition Display.”](#) Works by participants in the Delaware Department of State's 18th annual [Delaware Day Fourth Grade Competition](#) which challenges students to illustrate and explain the U.S. Constitution and the role played by Delawareans in the writing and ratification of the nation's founding document. [Legislative Hall](#), 411 Legislative Ave., Dover. Mon.–Fri., 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission but passage through security checkpoint required. 302-744-4114.



Detail from Bunker Hill

Elementary School's display
from last year's Delaware
Day Fourth Grade
Competition.

Ongoing

"Delaware Railroads: Elegant Travel and Timely Transport."

Exhibit explores the history of rail travel and transport in the First State emphasizing the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad (1832), the Delaware Railroad (1852), the Junction and Breakwater Railroad (1857) and the Queen Anne's Railroad (1896). [Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Nov. 1–March 31: Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Oct. 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-645-1148.



Cast iron passenger train including engine, tender and three passenger cars. Made by Vindex Toy Company, Belvedere, Ill., circa 1905. From the exhibit "Delaware Railroads: Elegant Travel and Timely Transport" at the Zwaanendael Museum.

Ongoing

"Five Stories." Display explores the varied lives of people who lived on the plantation including Dickinson family members, tenant farmers, tradesmen, free blacks, indentured servants and enslaved individuals. [John Dickinson Plantation](#) Welcome Center, 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover. Oct. 1–March 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Sept. 30: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.

Ongoing

"Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania." Online exhibit

explores the life of Founding Father John Dickinson and the publication of his essays that described Colonial American grievances with the British government.

Ongoing

[“New Castle: Three Forts, One Community.”](#) Exhibit examines the 17th-century struggle for control of New Castle by the Dutch, Swedes and English, and the strongholds that they built to maintain their power. [New Castle Court House Museum](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-323-4453.

Ongoing

[“The Old State House: A True Restoration 1976-2016.”](#) Display explores preservation work that has been conducted since Delaware’s first permanent capitol building in Dover was restored to its original appearance in 1976. From the collections of the State of Delaware. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Mon.–Sat., 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.



The Old State House

Ongoing

[“The Path to Freedom: A History of the Underground Railroad in Delaware.”](#) Exhibit explores Delaware’s role in the clandestine network that transported American slaves to freedom including the true journey of the Hawkins family from bondage in Maryland, through Delaware, to freedom in Pennsylvania. Part II of the display explores some of the challenges faced by Black Delawareans after the Civil War, and showcases Delaware trailblazers who helped break racial and gender barriers. [New Castle Court House Museum](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission. 302-323-4453.

Ongoing

[**Sculpture by Charles Parks**](#). Display of works by the noted Wilmington artist featuring historical and political figures including a Minute Man, and presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and George W. Bush. [**New Castle Court House Museum**](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-323-4453.

Ongoing

[**"A Seaborne Citizenry: The DeBraak and Its Atlantic World."**](#) Exhibit utilizes artifacts recovered from His Majesty's Sloop of War DeBraak, a British warship that sank off the Delaware coast on May 25, 1798, to tell the story of the vessel, its crew and the historical context within which it operated in the Atlantic World of the late 18th century. [**Zwaanendael Museum**](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Nov. 1–March 31: Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Oct. 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-645-1148.

Ongoing

[**"Simple Machines."**](#) Display demonstrating the six "simple machines"—incline ramp, screw, wedge, pulley, lever and wheel—that constitute the elementary building blocks of which many more-complicated machines are composed. [**John Dickinson Plantation**](#), 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover. Oct. 1–March 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Sept. 30: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.

Ongoing

[**"When Janie Comes Marching Home: Women's Fight to Serve."**](#) Display explores the participation of women in America's armed conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the present, and their fight to be allowed to serve their country during wartime. [**Legislative Hall**](#), 411 Legislative Ave., Dover. Mon.–Fri., 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission but passage through security checkpoint required. 302-744-4114.

Administered by the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the five museums of the State of Delaware—the John Dickinson Plantation, the Johnson Victrola Museum, the New Castle Court House Museum, The Old State House and the Zwaanendael Museum—tell the story of the First State's contributions to the history and culture of the United States. Through tours, exhibits, school programs and hands-on activities, the museums shine a spotlight on Delaware's unique history and the diverse people who came to live there. The museums are [accredited by the American Alliance of Museums](#). The New Castle Court House Museum and the John Dickinson Plantation are partner sites of the [First State National Historical Park](#). The Old State House is located on the Dover Green, another partner site of the park. Go to the following for a [comprehensive, long-term calendar of division-sponsored events](#).

The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is an agency of the State of Delaware. The division enhances Delaware's quality of life by preserving the state's unique historical heritage, fostering community stability and economic vitality and providing educational programs and assistance to the general public on Delaware history. The division's diverse array of services includes operation of five museums which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, administration of the State Historic Preservation Office, conservation of the state's archaeological and historic-objects collections, operation of a conference center and management of historic properties across the state. Primary funding for division programs and services is provided by annual appropriations from the Delaware General Assembly and grants from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, a federal agency. However, the contents and opinions expressed in the division's programs and services do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior.



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